**Student Attribute Curriculum – Goal Setting**

**Student Prep:** Complete the *Math Responsibilities and Goal Setting writing assignment.*

**Activity Length:** 10-20 mins for Collaborative Lab, depending on group size. 10 mins for card sorting activity. 10 mins for class debrief.

**Collaborative Lab:** Students should be split into groups (3-5 in each group) and given the *Collaborative Lab - Goal Setting* instruction sheet. The sheet has students informally discuss who they are, why they are enrolled in this math course, and the most important goal they have for the quarter.

**Instructor’s Role:** You should be available and interested as the groups share with each other, but be sure not to hover over any one group too long. This is a chance for the students to get to know each other and their motivations for being enrolled in your math course.

Students will be asked to pause after their initial sharing. This pause is meant as a chance for you to check that everyone feels they have been involved in the sharing and ask any important questions that may have came up during their conversation. Before you leave the group, you should hand them a copy of the “What about goals?” document and ask someone to read it to the group. This is also a good time to hand them their stack of goal statement cards (see card sorting activity below).

**Debrief:** Using the “What about goals?” document below, discuss the reason for having goals and the attributes of powerful and useful goal setting. *Students will be asked to edit their writing assignment by ensuring that the goals they have developed are: specific, realistic, measurable, and proximal.*

**Collaborative Lab - Goal Setting**

*Note: Choose one person in your group to the facilitator. It is their job to read these instructions aloud to the group.*

**The following steps are designed to give your group a chance to get to know one another and give you each a chance to talk about the goals you have for this math class. Please be as honest as you are comfortable being in this setting.**

1. Find your group (obviously if you are reading this you have completed the first step).
2. Beginning with the person who’s birthday is closest to today, go clockwise around the group with each person sharing:
   1. Their name
   2. The reason they are in school at [enter school name here] and specifically why they are enrolled in this math class.
   3. The most important goal they have for the quarter.

*This is a chance for you to get to know one another in your group. If you would like to talk about something not on the list above feel free! Remember to be equitable with the group’s time. Full participation during this activity requires that you not only talk about yourself, but also listen well (feel free to ask questions!).*

**Let your instructor know when you have completed the first 3 steps before continuing…**

1. Answer the following question (for each person) below the line on this worksheet:

“What, specifically and realistically, are you going to do this week to work toward the goals you have for this course?”

**Goal Setting - Card Activity**

**Overview:** This activity should take place after students have shared in groups about their goals and read through the What About Goals? document. This simple activity asks them to sort through different goal statements, determining whether the goal listed is a performance goal or a mastery goal.

**Activity Prep:** Create cards (index cards or cut from a printed sheet) with one of the following statements on each card. You are encouraged to create some of your own statements that relate better to your course. Each group should be handed a set of these cards during the collaborative lab.

“I hope to get an A in this class.”

“I have been away from school for 10 years and would like to become comfortable again doing math.”

“I just need to pass this course so that I can get into the chemistry course I need for my major.”

“I would like to understand how fractions work and how they are use in the real world.”

“I want to do well on tests. I have math anxiety and don’t test well.”

“I don’t need to get an A in this course I just want to pass!”

“I have never done math by hand. I always use a calculator. I would like to know how to multiply and divide decimals by hand.”

“I would like to be good at Algebra and understand it! In high school, I passed my algebra course, but didn’t understand what I was doing.”

**Activty:** Hand each student a blank card and ask them to write the goal they shared with the group on the card. Add these cards to the set you have developed for them. Ask the group to work together in sorting the goal statements between performance goals and mastery goals.

**What about goals?**

*Goals provide students a set of personal standards by which they can judge the outcomes of their learning attempts. These standards also have the effect of motivating and encouraging students during their learning as they are able to more accurately gauge the progress of their understandings (Bandura,1986).*

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| **Performance Goals:** Performance goals refer to goals set with a focus on the **outcomes** of educational efforts (Hagen & Weinstein, 1995). Examples of performance goals in mathematics may include desired course grades, homework scores, and exam scores.  **Mastery Goals:** Mastery goals refer to goals set with a focus on the learning or mastery of concepts (Hagen & Weinstein, 1995). Goals of mastery are goals for certain **levels of understanding** in specific mathematical concepts or comfort in applying new mathematical procedures to real life situations. |

A mastery goal has the effect of prompting students to seek challenges instead of avoiding them and motivates them to put forth more effort into their learning (Hagen & Weinstein, 1995). Also, the evaluation of a student’s progress towards completing mastery goals is not dependent on the assessment of homework and examinations. These types of goals empower students to accurately self-monitor their progress towards their goals and this monitoring is not dependent on the evaluation of someone else (i.e. - the instructor), as is the case with performance goals.

**Characteristics of effective goals**

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| ***Measurable*** – To be prepared to accurately evaluate one’s progress, goals must have a sense of measure to them. Example “I will feel comfortable with and understand each type of problem presented in section 2.5” or “I will be able to complete any type of fraction problem whether it is addition/subtraction or multiplication/division.”  ***Proximal*** – Long-term and short-term goals are both important but proximal (short-term) goals offer themselves to evaluation more easily and therefore are more motivating.  ***Specific*** – This aids with a goal being measurable. Specific goals provide very strict direction to your education.  ***Realistic*** – If you can’t reach a goal that you set for yourself you will begin to view your goals as unattainable references and therefore sapping the usefulness of setting goals in the first place. |

Sources:

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory.* New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Hagen, A. S., & Weinstein, C. E. (1995). Achievement goals, self-regulated learning, and the role of classroom context. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 63, 43-55.